

## PHILADELPHIA ORIGINALITY— PAST AND PRESENT

It is strange, is it not, that Philadelphia should be backward in the employment of modern advertising? For Philadelphia in times past showed great originality in this respect, and has been the scene of many great advertising achievements.

The first great national advertising campaign was originated and carried to success by a Philadelphia banker. Jay Cooke sold \$1,240,000,000 of war bonds for Lincoln by advertising.

Modern department store advertising has been carried to its high development as a result of the pioneering work of a Philadelphia merchant—John Wanamaker. His first day's sales on April 8, 1861, amounted to \$24.67. Of this, 67 cents was retained to make change on the next day, and the \$24 was put back into advertising.

Philadelphia is the home of the largest periodical publishing house in the world, a house whose success has been built upon advertising. The very first issue of *The Ladies' Home Journal* was advertised at an expense of \$400. Today *The Curtis Publishing Company* invests between \$200,000 and \$300,000 a year in advertising.

The prosperity of its three great publications is due to the tremendous power which they exert upon millions of consumers—a power which thousands of manufacturers employ by purchasing advertising space in their columns.

Too few manufacturers in Philadelphia have learned the lessons taught in their own city by history and present-day example.

But history and example should never be followed blindly. The essential point is originality in adapting established methods to individual needs.

Some one has said that originality is of two kinds—originality of thought and originality of expression. Applied to industry, this might be paraphrased as originality of manufacture and originality of distribution.

For decades Philadelphia led in industry because

she possessed originality in manufacture. Her great prestige was built upon the ability to make machines, devise processes and organize production. Most of her great pioneers found thus the outlet for their originality because that was what the times demanded.

Today, the times demand originality of distribution. Those same pioneers, were they living and working today, would be devoting their energies to that kind of originality. For they were men quick to feel the necessities of the era. But the newer generation in Philadelphia has clung to the tradition of originality in manufacture and has not sensed the new needs for originality in distribution.

Where Philadelphia manufacturers have grasped the new weapons, it has sometimes been only in the spirit of imitator rather than in that of innovator.

For example, a certain industry here saw that its competitors elsewhere were using advertising with large units of space. The Philadelphia manufacturer followed suit. Some time later the original advertiser reduced his advertising to small units.

Perhaps his purpose was to put his competitors to test, and see if they had the courage of their convictions. At least, that was the effect. The Philadelphia firm, instead of thinking the problem out for itself, at once took this as an indication of the failure of large-space advertising, and also reduced. Then when competition was thoroughly "shaken down," the original advertiser came back again with even larger-space than before, and once more became the dominating factor in the field.

If Philadelphia manufacturers are to employ modern methods, they must do so in the thorough conviction that these methods are effective, and not simply because their opponents have been using them.

This is true originality—the kind which made Philadelphia great in manufacture.

And it is a secret of success in advertising.

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY, INDEPENDENCE SQUARE, PHILADELPHIA

*The Ladies' Home Journal*

*The Saturday Evening Post*

*The Country Gentleman*